

Game Face: God's Heart

Ready:

"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility consider others as more important than yourselves." - Philippians 2:3

Set

As a Christian athlete, can you compete to win and still love your opponent like Jesus would? Yes, absolutely!

We don't concede out of love. We're called to compete in love. We glorify God in everything we do, including how we train, how we play, and how we treat our competition (1 Cor 10:31). We're playing for God—our audience of One.

Eric Liddell, the Scottish Olympian portrayed in "Chariots of Fire", reportedly said, "God made me fast. And when I run, I feel His pleasure." Liddell's training was fierce, but his heart was humble. He didn't just run for God—he ran with God. That's our calling as well.

But here's the game-changer: the love we show is the love we grow. Grown by God's Spirit, agape love is inner conditioning that keeps our competitive fire in balance (Gal 5:22–23). Just like physical endorphins fueling our competitive drive, agape love fuels our character drive. Agape love on the field reflects humility in victory and grace in defeat. It's fierce in effort but gentle in attitude. We don't humiliate; we elevate. The Game Face that we show reflects God's heart that we grow.

So why do we compete? Because God designed our bodies to move, strive, sweat—and yes, even win. Godly conditioning strengthens both body and character—uniting physical intensity with spiritual integrity (1 Cor 9:27). We learn life lessons about leaning into life's resistance, making spontaneous decisions, confronting poor behavior, winning with humility and graciously accepting defeat.

When we compete with Spirit-grown love, we demonstrate that character is as important as our place on the podium. Game-tested love proves we've trained more than our muscles—we've grown fruit that lasts for a lifetime.

Go

- What drives your competition— God's glory or your own?
- Share a time when your actions showed Christ more than your stats.
- Explain how you can balance intensity and humility in your sport.

Workout

Galatians 5:22-23

1 Corinthians 9:27

1 Corinthians 10:31

Overtime

"My God and my Coach, like Eric Liddell, let me feel your pleasure when I compete. Let me train strenuously. Let me compete tenaciously. When my race ends, let me respect my opponents, in word and deed, so that they see your heart's desire for their lives, too. Let me shine today. Amen."



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